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## THE HIGH-SCHOOL PROGRAM OF STUDIES AND THE STUDENT'S CURRICULUM.

### I.

#### INTRODUCTION.

THE Committee on College Entrance Requirements in its report, rendered to the National Educational Association in 1899, took special pains to define the terms "program of studies," "curriculum," and "course of study," and their definitions make clear some very useful distinctions. The public, however, still uses the phrase "course of study" to mean at different times that which the educator denotes by the three separate terms. As in this paper the definitions given by the aforesaid committee will be strictly followed, it seems advisable to quote them at length from the committee's report. This states:

Three distinct terms seem to be needed: (1) *program of studies*, which includes all of the studies offered in a given school; (2) *curriculum*, which means the group of studies schematically arranged for any pupil or set of pupils; (3) *course of study*, which means the quantity, quality, and method of the work in any given subject of instruction.

Thus the program of studies includes the curriculum, and may indeed furnish the material for the construction of an indefinite number of curriculums. The course of study is the unit, or element, from which both the program and the curriculum are constructed.

These courses of study (in the different subjects, English, mathematics, etc.) constitute so many national norms, or units, out of which any school may make up as rich a program of studies as its means and facilities permit; a program, moreover, which may be made to yield several curriculums, or, possibly, almost as many curriculums as there are students, each curriculum perhaps being better than the others, from an individual point of view.<sup>1</sup>

The "course of study," then, as here used, means the course to be pursued in the teaching of any given study. It does not here stand for the collection of subjects taught in a given school; for that the phrase "program of studies" is substituted. Neither, be it noted, does it stand for the group of subjects studied by a

<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings of the National Educational Association*, 1899, pp. 670, 671.

particular student during his whole high-school career; for that is employed the term "curriculum."

It is proposed to treat in this paper of the formation of a "program of studies" for a high school, and the formation of a student's curriculum in a high school in which a certain program of studies has been adopted. Extended theoretical discussion will be studiously avoided and the subject treated throughout from the practical standpoint.

One important feature of this paper may be pointed out in advance. Most people will admit that expert educators know best both the subjects and the methods of treating them that would seem to be most truly serviceable to a given student. This does not mean a stereotyped "one course for all," since all *expert* educators take account nowadays of the student's individuality; but it does mean that after consultation with the student the expert educator is more likely than any one else, the unaided student himself included, to diagnose the student's case correctly and to prescribe the best curriculum for him. On the other hand, there is reason to believe that the student who has the responsibility of framing his own curriculum, and the consequent feeling that he is thereafter attempting to carry out some plan of his own, is likely to work much more earnestly, much more effectively, than the student who is forced to take a certain curriculum, however good, and allowed no choice whatever in the matter. But, it will be at once remarked, the curriculum which the student chooses will not be theoretically as good for him as that which the expert educator would prescribe for him. Undoubtedly it would seem so, and the matter, thus stated, apparently takes the form of a dilemma. That this need not really be so it will be one of the objects of this paper to point out, for it is believed that, under proper conditions, the advantages of both sides can be readily obtained.

#### PART I. THE PROGRAM OF STUDIES.

And now let us proceed with the formation of a program of studies for a given high school. Every school has its limitations which greatly restrict the number of different subjects that can

be taught in it. It becomes, therefore, a matter of selection to know what to leave out and what to include. The whole field of secondary studies must first be comprehended, and the definite lines marked out along which selection must proceed.

The following chart will make clear what the secondary studies are, and how they are related:

MAIN GROUPS		SUPPLEMENTARY
HISTORY	LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE	FINE ARTS
Ancient history, to 800 A. D. Mediæval and modern history English history U. S. history and civil government Economics	English and Foreign { Ancient Modern Ancient { Latin Greek Modern { French German Spanish	Drawing Painting Music
NATURAL SCIENCE	MATHEMATICS	USEFUL ARTS
Physical geography Physics Chemistry Biology { Botany Zoölogy Physiology Geology and astronomy	Advanc'd Elem'y { Algebra Arithmetic Plane geometry Plane trigonom'y Solid geometry Higher algebra	Mechanical drawing Bookkeeping Stenography Typewriting Manual training

Besides the "arts," we have here four main groups of studies, namely, those of history, language, and literature, natural science, and mathematics. History tells us of the relations of men, one with another, group with group, nation with nation; literature gives us individual expression on various phases of man and nature; while language deals with one of the means of expression, which are still further revealed by a careful study of the fine arts. Natural science, on the other hand, calls our attention to things external to man; these things are regarded quantitatively in the study of mathematics, which also forms one of man's chief guides in the useful arts. Upon closer study, it will be found that these groups admit of further division; thus, history may be divided into politics, economics, and civil government;

natural science into sciences, observational and experimental ; and language and literature into two distinct subjects<sup>1</sup> with different pedagogical values. This will account for the slight differences<sup>2</sup> in grouping made by educational experts. But the idea and value of grouping remains, and it is undoubtedly one of the most valuable guides to all makers of curriculums.

It is to be noted that, although the Committee of Ten thus makes *five* groups, yet in its suggested programs and in much of its discussion it seems to work almost entirely on a four-group basis.

The following is the grouping of the school studies by the Committee of Fifteen :

1. Mathematics and physics.
2. Biology, as including the plant and the animal.
3. Literature and art, chiefly the study of literary works of art.
4. Grammar and the technical and scientific study of language.
5. History and the study of sociological, political, and social institutions.

The chart gives us a complete list of the subjects commonly taught in secondary schools. To comprehend the entire program, and to see each subject in its relation to the rest, is alone a study well worth while. Speaking on the subject of advisable correlations in school work, Mr. C. B. Gilbert, when superintendent of schools of St. Paul, Minn., said :

No one can devote his energies first to comprehending and then to imparting the broad ideas implied in a truly correlated course of study without growing in breadth and power from the effort. . . . The very act of

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Harris makes language and literature two distinct groups, and so divides the school studies into *five* co-ordinate groups. I have placed language and literature in one group, because they are in almost all high schools taught together. Still the distinction is, I believe, growing. Distinct classes in English composition are not uncommon in high schools.

<sup>2</sup> Compare the following list of subjects regarded as proper for secondary schools submitted by the Committee of Ten at the suggestion of the appointed "Conferences" : (1) language—Latin, Greek, English, German, and French (and locally Spanish); (2) mathematics—algebra, geometry, trigonometry; (3) general history, and the intensive study of special epochs; (4) natural history—including descriptive astronomy, meteorology, botany, zoölogy, physiology, geology, and ethnology, most of which subjects may be conveniently grouped under the title of physical geography; and (5) physics and chemistry.

grasping and administering a broad and wisely correlated course of study is in itself a liberal education.<sup>1</sup>

It is not likely, however, that any single school in the country could offer so wide a range of subjects for its students to choose from as this chart reveals. The High School of St. Louis, Mo., it is true, includes them all except astronomy, geology, and manual training; it teaches in addition psychology, ethics, science, and history of education, and nature study. But with 62 teachers it has the exceptional enrolment of 2,092 students, and is both high school and normal school in one. Large schools, it is evident, can offer more subjects than small schools, but probably all must always omit some subjects, and it becomes at once a matter of great importance to decide which subjects shall be adopted into the program and to what extent, and which subjects shall be omitted from it. We shall therefore proceed to consider at some length the lines along which selection must take place, and for purposes of illustration shall take up the special consideration of California High schools, and of those pay special attention to the three-teacher schools, where the process of selection is most severe, and only the most important subjects can survive to find a place in the program of studies.

The considerations which will very largely determine the organizer in the selection of subjects for the "program of studies" may be stated as follows:

I. General considerations: (1) pedagogical; (2) physiological; (3) sociological; (4) æsthetic.

II. Particular considerations: (1) the state law; (2) university requirements; (3) majority preferences or local environment; (4) the number and special fitnesses of teachers employed; (5) the number of daily recitations advisable.

These controlling influences in the organization of our high schools are so important that they demand careful inquiry. Let us then consider them in turn.

#### I. PEDAGOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS.

1. *Regard for the different groups of studies.*—It would be aside from the purposes of this paper to take up the discussion of

<sup>1</sup>See *Proceedings of the National Educational Association*, 1896, pp. 299-307.

"formal discipline" which is here involved. Besides, that discussion has continued already so long in educational circles that certain definite results may be taken for granted. The man who said, "I don't care what a boy studies, so long as he studies *hard*," would find few sympathizers today. The new psychology may be considered to have established the necessity for different kinds of studies for the development of the different centers of the brain. For this purpose, and also that the mind of the student may be prepared to interpret and to profit by the varied experiences met with in his changing environment, the school studies have been appropriately grouped, and the principle laid down that all students should for the greater part of their school life take studies from all the groups. To use the words of the Report of the Committee of Fifteen, this is required by (1) the "symmetrical whole of studies in the world of human learning," and (2) "the psychological symmetry of the whole mind."<sup>1</sup>

2. *Election by the students should be possible within the groups.*—One of the most important of the educational reforms of recent years is that which emphasizes the necessity of *interest* on the part of the student in his work. To secure this in secondary schools, endeavors are made to include in the program not only subjects from all the groups, but also several subjects from each of the groups, in order to make it possible for the student to pursue within certain limits the studies he prefers. Thus, several foreign languages will be taught, where possible, in the schools not with a view to any one student's studying them all, but in order to suit the desires and needs of different students. If, however, the school is very small, few foreign languages can be taught, rarely more than two, and almost all students will therefore be compelled to take the same languages.

<sup>1</sup>For a clear, concise, and definite statement of reasons why one or more subjects from each of the main groups should be included in every curriculum, the reader is referred to an article by Dr. Harris, published in the *Proceedings of the National Educational Association* for 1896 (pp. 287-96) entitled "The Necessity for Five Co-ordinate Groups of Studies in the School." See also *Psychologic Foundations of Education*, by the same author. Chap. 36 in this book is devoted to the "Psychology of the Course of Study in Schools—Elementary, Secondary, and Higher," Sec. 208 of this chapter discusses "the five windows of the soul" or "five co-ordinate groups of studies." See also W. S. Sutton, "The Determining Factors of the Curriculum of the Secondary School," *SCHOOL REVIEW*, Vol. X (November, 1902), pp. 687-701.

3. *Sufficient time must be allotted each subject to enable it to yield its educational value.*—This was clearly set forth in the Report of the Committee of Ten, as follows :

The committee believes that to establish just proportions between the several subjects, or groups of allied subjects, it is asserted that each principal subject shall be taught thoroughly and extensively, and therefore for an adequate number of periods a week on the school program . . . . If every subject studied at all is to be studied thoroughly and consecutively, every subject must receive an adequate time allotment. If every subject is to provide a substantial mental training, it must have a time allotment sufficient to produce that fruit. Finally, since selection must be exercised by or on behalf of the individual pupil, all the subjects between which choice is allowed should be approximately equivalent to each other in seriousness, dignity, and efficacy. Therefore they should have approximately equal time allotments. The Conferences have abundantly shown how every subject which they recommend can be made a serious subject of instruction, well fitted to train the pupil's powers of observation, expression, and reasoning. It remains for makers of school programs to give every subject the chance of developing a good training capacity by giving it an adequate time allotment.

When we come to discuss the making of curriculums and the arrangement of the school time-table, we shall need to take into account other pedagogical considerations, such as the order in which the subjects shall be studied and the number of subjects a student shall pursue at one time. The three pedagogic considerations, however, which mainly control the organizer's selection of subjects for the program of studies are those just given, namely: (1) regard for all the groups of studies; (2) selection, where convenient, of several subjects from each group in order to make election possible for the student, but not so many from any one group as to make the program lop-sided; and (3) allotment of sufficient time to each subject selected to enable it to yield that training which it is best fitted to yield. (N. B.—This means the omission of every subject that cannot be taught for a sufficient length of time.)

#### II. PHYSIOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS.

Educators are feeling more and more compelled to take account of the great difference wrought in our mode of life by the great change in industrial conditions during the last century. The population of the United States was in 1776 chiefly agricul-



tural; only one thirty-third part of the people lived in cities. Today one-third of our people live in cities, and of the other two-thirds many are suburbanized by the trolley-car. This means that our young people do not receive at home the manual training and physical development their grandfathers had, and it becomes incumbent on the schools, at least in certain localities, to provide work that will develop more fully the motor side of the students. Hence the importance of the useful arts. They supply a real need, and are worth all the time and money they require, since they help to develop sound bodies for sane minds, and, adding a greater interest to the school, undoubtedly improve its discipline.<sup>1</sup> The useful arts, moreover, attract many to the high school for further training who would otherwise discontinue their efforts for an education. Kansas City in a very few years doubled its high-school attendance by the establishment of a manual-training high school for boys and girls.<sup>2</sup> All of which is perfectly natural, for physiological conditions are fundamental, and, combined with industrial needs, make demands we cannot with impunity neglect.

### III. SOCIOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS.

President Butler in his address entitled "Is There a New Education?" says: "What, for lack of a better term, I call the sociological aspect of education, is in many respects the most important of all."

"And of late," says another writer, "the old institutional conception of education may be said to contend with the newer theory of individualism. But out of the clash of these two conflicting notions an ideal seems now to be rising, truer than either — *the ideal of social individualism*."<sup>3</sup>

In making his selection for the program of studies, the organizer must indeed ask himself whether the curriculums rendered possible by it will be such as to prepare the students, adopting

<sup>1</sup> See CHARLES DEGARMO, *Interest and Education*, especially chap. vii, entitled "Interest, Motor Training, and The Modern City Child." (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1902.)

<sup>2</sup> U. S. *Report of Education*, 1899-1900, p. 1373.

<sup>3</sup> H. M. SCOTT, *Organic Education*, p. 18.

them for life in the world which now is and which they will soon enter. And here it needs to be constantly iterated that the world they will enter is not the world of two thousand years ago, nor is it the world of a hundred years ago, when there were no railroads, no steamboats, few factories, and no electrical appliances. Therefore with President Butler<sup>1</sup> we may say: "The first question to be asked of any course of study is: Does it lead to a knowledge of our contemporary civilization? If not, it is neither efficient nor liberal."

#### IV. ÆSTHETIC CONSIDERATIONS.

Involved, as we are, in so many problems of an executive nature, there is danger of our forgetting that we are planning for the education of individuals at their most emotional stage. Discussing the characteristics of adolescence, President G. Stanley Hall<sup>2</sup> reminds us that the youth has

nameless longings for what is far, remote, strange; which [fact] emphasizes the self-estrangement Hegel so well describes, and which marks the normal use of the presentiment of something higher than self. Girls now grow more conscientious and inward, and begin to feel their music, reading, religion, painting, etc., and to realize the bearing of these upon their adult life. There is often a strong instinct of devotion and self-sacrifice toward some, perhaps almost any, object or in almost any cause which circumstances may present. Shall the school ignore these, the real things, in adolescent life, and drive on coldly in the old scholastic ruts? Cannot these "nameless longings" be used to lead to lofty ideals and noble aspirations that shall not only carry the youth over the stormy period of adolescence, but afford him inspiration and enthusiasm all along life's way? The "Overture" to *Tannhäuser* and the "Pilgrim Chorus" have been a source of moral energy to me and many boys. I sometimes think it would be well worth while if students once a week could listen to the clarion notes of the cornets and trombones in the *Tannhäuser* "Overture," proclaiming defiance in no uncertain tones to the temptations of the flesh represented by the soul-bewildering, mind-entrancing, will-weakening strains of the tremulous violins. Saul summoned

<sup>1</sup>N. M. BUTLER, *The Meaning of Education, and other Essays*, p. 91.

<sup>2</sup>See G. STANLEY HALL, "The Moral and Religious Training of Children and Adolescents," *Pedagogical Seminary*, Vol. I, pp. 196-210.

David to charm away his nightmare with the harp; may we not summon music to give us victory over passion, develop in us living springs of moral energy, enable us to "withstand, and, having done all, still to stand"?

Again, who can overestimate the moral staying-power afforded by such pictures as Millet's "Angelus," Sant's "The Soul's Awakening," and Ferruzzi's "Madonna"? Truly, temptations lose their power when these possess us, and at such times we look with scorn and loathing on the miserable things that would drag us in the mire.

I wish, therefore, to take this opportunity to suggest that the æsthetic side of education should not be neglected in our schools. I occasionally hear a boy humming over strains from an oratorio or from one of Wagner's soul-stirring operas, and I know every time the lofty character that boy has; equally indicative are the pictures on the walls of his room. But for every boy of this kind I can find several who care only for "Tootsey-Wootsey," or some ribald catch equally hideous, and who adorn the walls of their rooms with all manner of demoralizing advertisements.

The literary, the scientific, the motor sides of the educational problem have been abundantly emphasized; it is now time to emphasize the æsthetic, to cultivate good taste, to culture the heart, to purify the emotions. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his *soul*?" And this does not need to refer to his soul in any other world than this. The newspapers teem with accounts of men who have gained all of this world that they can possibly use, and more, but who, having in the process lost all sense for art, for music, for refinement, and for culture, are miserable in the extreme.

Let us develop the æsthetic side of our high-school students.<sup>1</sup>

HERBERT LEE.

<sup>1</sup> For a very interesting account of what has been done and for suggestions as to what might be done in high-school æsthetics, see Bulletin 16 (March, 1902), High School Department of the University of the State of New York, pp. 403-28, included in the *Ninth Annual Report of the High School Department* of the said University.

[To be continued.]